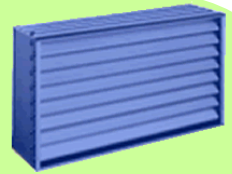


# FLOOD VENTS

The Official Update of the Rhode Island Floodplain Management Program



Volume 2, Issue 1

Spring 2011

Welcome to **Flood Vents**, the quarterly issued floodplain newsletter from the Rhode Island Floodplain Management Program.



## House Flood Insurance Reform Bill Wins Bipartisan Support

A House subcommittee approved a bipartisan bill to reauthorize and reform the nation's flood insurance program.

The ten Republicans and eight Democrats on the Insurance, Housing and Community Opportunity Subcommittee approved the bill on a voice vote.

The legislation (HR 1309) provides for a five-year extension of the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) and phases out the program's rate subsidies, gradually raises all premiums to reflect actual costs, improves the accuracy of flood maps and allows more public input into the mapping process, and encourages private insurer and reinsurer participation in the market.

The bill also adds two new coverage options, ties policy limits to inflation, and sets higher deductibles for rate-subsidized properties.

The NFIP, which is more than \$17 billion in debt, is currently slated to expire on Sept. 30. It has been operating on short-term authorizations and has been criticized by fiscal watchdogs for under-pricing risk and by environmental groups for promoting development in environmentally-sensitive areas.

To read more [click here](#).

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**Flood Vents** is a product of the Rhode Island Floodplain Management Program

## StormSmart Website Helps Storm Preparation



A new website has been launched on the first anniversary of Rhode Island's massive flooding which is designed to help local and state officials, and the public, learn how to prepare for storms to protect people and property. Rhode Island is the seventh state nationally and only the second in New England to launch its own StormSmart website. The site contains resources to help communities take action to improve coastal resiliency. StormSmart Coasts is a special feature within designed for local officials whose towns face risks from storms, flooding, and sea level rise.

The StormSmart Coasts Rhode Island site includes real-time data as a storm is approaching, information to prepare communities before the storm, emergency contacts during the storm, and advice on recovering after the storm. It also includes information about funding available to support emergency preparedness.

The website is available [here](#) and includes sections specifically for town council members or town managers, planning boards, building departments, and public works departments. Members can also interact with each other via the website to share information. This feature will be highlighted at the April 26 R.I. Flood Mitigation Association annual meeting, where participants in Rhode Island will link with other New England states for a webinar to discuss StormSmart Coasts resources and outreach tools.

StormSmart Coasts is supported by the NOAA Coastal Services Center (CSC) and the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), and was developed for Rhode Island by Rhode Island Sea Grant, the R.I. Emergency Management Agency, the R.I. Building Commission and the R.I. Coastal Resources Management Council (CRMC). The Northeast Regional Ocean Council (NROC) is a regional sponsor.



## **Brown University Reveals Findings of Study from March 2010 Flooding**

On Thursday morning, March 24, 2011, the Center for Environmental Studies at Brown University hosted a public event and panel discussion to release the findings of a six-part report on the March 2010 Floods. Six students, representing the twenty-one student team who conducted the research, presented the major findings in each of the report's chapters to an audience of Brown students, Providence citizens, government officials, and visiting scholars. [Click here to read the report.](#)

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## **FEMA Releases Wind Retrofitting Guide**



FEMA has released a new publication on how to best retrofit existing residential buildings for improved performance during high-wind events in all coastal regions; it is applicable to one- and two-family dwellings, but not to manufactured housing. While it was designed with the Gulf of Mexico in mind, it should be applicable for coastal areas around the country (or at least those subject to major wind). [Click here](#) to view the document.

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## **USGS Releases Flood Report: Elevation of the March–April 2010 Flood High Water in Selected River Reaches in RI**



The Massachusetts Water Science Center, in Northborough, MA, announced the availability of the on-line report "[Elevation of the March–April 2010 Flood High Water in Selected River Reaches in Rhode Island.](#)" U.S. Geological Survey Open-File Report 2011–1029, by Phillip J. Zarriello and Gardner C. Bent.



**Registration is now open for the 5th Annual RIFMA Conference:**  
***"Rocking the Boat in Floodplain Management:  
Innovative Approaches and Techniques"***

**When:** Tuesday, April 26, 2011, 8:00 am to 4:00 pm

**Where:** Radisson Airport Hotel, Post Road (Rte 1), Warwick, RI 02886  
(directly across from T. F. Green Airport)

In addition to information on coastal and riverine flooding issues and initiatives, the conference will include presentations on climate change adaptation tools and planning, flood inundation mapping, information on critical facilities affected during the March 2010 floods, the Rhode Island "Storm Smart Coast" program, local restoration projects, LEED for neighborhood development, and much more.

Certified Floodplain Managers (CFM) can earn 7 Continuing Education Credits for the conference.

The CFM Refresher Course and Exam will also be offered.

[Click here for conference registration form and for more details.](#)

**Rhode Island NFIP Factoid** (as of April 2011)  
All 39 Rhode Island communities participate in the NFIP